

# **VIP**

**VOLUNTEERS IN  
PREVENTION/PROBATION**  
**GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY PROBATE COURT**

January-February, 2011  
Volume 40, Issue 1



Linda Fawcett, Director  
Kelly Majszak, Adm. Asst.  
Judy Sanders, Adm. Asst.  
Email: [pcv@grandtraverse.org](mailto:pcv@grandtraverse.org)

## **Learning Partners-CASA In-Service Training**

On **Tuesday, January 18, 2011 at 4:00 pm**, Learning Partners and CASA volunteers will once again combine their monthly in-service meetings. Mary Beth Novak from Catholic Human Services will discuss understanding prescription drug misuse and how you can help prevent it.

Many of the parents of at-risk youth involved in Learning Partner and CASA assignments find themselves in District Court proceedings. Melanie Stanton, attorney and GAL\* will be our guest and explain two new flow-charts she has created so that volunteers may learn more about this adult criminal process. **All interested volunteers are invited to attend this valuable in-service training opportunity. Please RSVP at 231-922-4827**

**Note:** Learning Partners—this meeting will serve as your January monthly meeting. The presentation on prescription drugs will be approximately 1/2 hour. Plan on joining Laura for the second 1/2 hour or stay with CASA volunteers to learn about the adult justice system.

\*GAL—Guardian ad litem - A person appointed by the court during the course of a litigation, in which an infant, incompetent adult, unascertained or disappeared person is a party, for the purpose of protecting the interest of these parties during the litigation.

## **Guardian In-Service**

An in-service training opportunity for guardians, volunteers conducting reviews of guardianships and **interested volunteers** will be held:

**Thursday, February 3, 2011  
5:30 pm  
Multi Purpose Room  
Robert P. Griffin Hall of Justice**

Our guests will present on three important topics and interests of volunteer guardians.

Mary Beth Novak, Catholic Human Services will discuss prescription drug abuse to promote awareness about misuse of prescription drugs in our homes with, seniors, families and visitors.

Nancy Turner, Citizens for Better Care will discuss ethical behavior and decision making to assist volunteer guardians in their responsibilities in acting on behalf of others.

And Mark Wilson, Director of Admissions for the Lighthouse\* of Traverse City will discuss the mission and services provided by their facility and provide some pointers on how guardians may best work with them.

Refreshments will be served. **Please RSVP at 231-922-4827.**

**Note to Emergency Guardians:** We will meet at 4:00 pm so that you may join this in-service meeting.

\* The Lighthouse provides rehabilitations services for persons with traumatic brain injury and neurological disabilities.

# Happy Birthday

## Michigan Adoption Day

### January

Agnes Barrett  
Holli Ringgenberg  
Caroline Hirth  
Larry Snyder  
Colette Riffinburg  
Maswe hennrick  
Caron Alpers

Roberta Kuhlman  
Lou Isabell  
Al Wilkins  
Dan Briggs  
Mary Myers  
JoAnn Carlson  
Patricia Wazny



### February

Cathy Sevensma  
Jack Bay  
Betty Leden  
Valerie Doman  
Donna Thoma  
Lynn Troutman  
John Roeser  
Tanya Stolz  
Joan Wigton  
Beth Rideout  
Sue Green

Nancy Ferrar  
Betty Dunham  
Nancy Fraser  
Gary O'Connell  
Janet Snyder  
Cheri Hains  
Sophia Delonghi  
Marie Hanis  
Sue Summers  
Lynn Bryant  
Sue Olson

---

### Thanks for the Treats

Many thanks to volunteers for the wonderful holiday treats enjoyed by all here at Volunteer offices.

Sue Schmidt  
Kathleen Packer  
Barb & Al Wilkins



Donna Gonder  
Nancy Thompson

---

### Thank You

Thanks to Maeeda Kenaya for her donation of stuffed toys to the Court.



Michigan Adoption Day, held Tuesday, November 23, 2010, was a huge success with 18 children achieving finalization and permanency through adoption. Michigan Supreme Court Justice Alton T. Davis assisted Grand Traverse County Family Court Judge David L. Stowe on the bench. Children assisted in the formal court process by banging the gavel and joining the judges on a truly joyous occasion. A luncheon was held after court proceedings to celebrate and honor the new parents and their children.

Special thanks to CASA volunteers Nancy Winogrodzki, Caroll Weeks, Jan Meyer and Lynn Troutman who helped greet and direct families in the Hall of Justice and the court room on this very busy day!



---

### Cheryl Hains

Cheryl Hains, Community Service Work Manager for the past 10 years was honored by court employees during a Christmas luncheon on December 17, 2010. Cheri's position was not funded for 2011, due to county budget reductions.

We want to thank Cheri for her work with our youth and community service non-profit worksites.

We will miss her! The CSW program will continue to be supported as part of our therapeutic programming.

---

### Thoughts and Prayers

We are thinking of Susan Kraus—we hope she is out and about soon.

# Learning Partners



Learning Partners Enjoyed Dancing into the Night!

An evening of dinner and dancing was enjoyed by 7 Learning Partner students and their volunteers on a trip to Interlochen on December 9th. The week's snowy weather let up just long enough for our students to enjoy their special evening out!

After a dinner of pizza and breadsticks at Cicero's, the students and volunteers were the guests of Interlochen Arts Academy for a performance of the ballet Sleeping Beauty. The students did their best to follow the story through the glorious dancing and enchanting orchestra music, but most were mesmerized with the entire experience.

Thank you to Volunteer Betty Leden for making the arrangements and to Interlochen Arts Academy for hosting our delighted group. They learned a lot about music, dancing, and the arts through their evening adventure.

We are looking forward to inviting Learning Partners and their families to meet their volunteers for an afternoon of indoor ice skating this winter. Stay bundled up!!

On February 8, 2011, Dr. Weckstein will present "Depression and Bipolar Disorder in Children and Adolescents" at Traverse City Central High School at 6:30 pm. This presentation is free.



Learning Partners attend "Sleeping Beauty", 2010 Interlochen Arts Academy

CASA



A training for Court Appointed Special Advocates will begin **Tuesday, February 22, 2011**. CASA volunteers look out for the best interest\* of children placed in foster care due to neglect or abuse and speak for them in court. Local experts volunteer their time to train CASA volunteers in a 30 hour curriculum provided by National CASA.\*\*

CASA update: Linda Fawcett and Diana Zapalski attended the Michigan CASA Conference held in Grand Rapids on November 12-13, 2010. Over 150 CASA staff and volunteers from all over the state attended the conference dedicated to Patricia Wagner, former MICASA director, who passed away last spring.

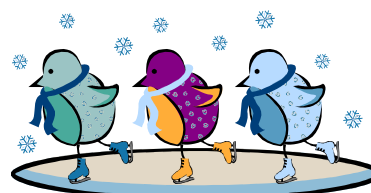
We are happy to announce that Christie Lypka has been hired as the new Executive Director of Michigan CASA. She comes to Michigan from Georgia where she was a CASA program manager. Her goal is to have a CASA program in every county in the state! We look forward to working with her.

See page 1 for information on our January 18 meeting of CASA volunteers.

No meeting will be held in February so that CASA volunteers might meet Christie Lypka on March 1st.

\*Best interests—"safe, permanent home, as soon as possible".

\*\*CASA website—[www.casaforkids.org](http://www.casaforkids.org)



## **NMC Extended Education Classes**

Northwestern Michigan College offers a wide variety of extended education classes throughout the winter months.

If you are looking for something to learn this winter, check it out at [www.nmc.edu/ees](http://www.nmc.edu/ees).



---

## **HELPLINK**

HELPLINK, a new service in Traverse City, is prepared to help connect people in need with navigators and hopefully provide a one-stop place for them to receive help.

HELPLINK is located at 1105 E. Front St., and is open 10:00 am to 3:00 pm Tuesday and Thursday.

If you or someone you know needs help finding human services or help with paperwork from human services agencies, HELPLINK can be of assistance.

For more information, please call 231-946-6278.



## **CHAP Coalition Health Access Program**

If you or someone you know does not have health insurance, this information is important.

The Traverse Health Clinic's Coalition Health Access Program (CHAP) is a free program for qualifying, uninsured adult residents of Benzie, Grand Traverse and Leelanau counties.

For information about this program please call:

Benzonia: 800-816-1658

Leelanau: 888-744-2468

Traverse City CHAP office: 866-483-6987

## **Gift of Warmth Gala**

Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency will sponsor the "Gift of Warmth Gala" again this year. This event will help warm the homes of our neediest neighbors

Saturday, January 22, 2011

6:30—11:00 pm

Park Place Hotel (The Dome)



Please call 231-947-3780 for more information.

---

## **Free Tax Preparation And Workshops**

Presented by Project Homeless Connect and the Traverse Bay Poverty Reduction Initiative. Workshops are free with free lunch and daycare available.

**Saturday, February 5, 2011**

**TBAISD Career-Tech Center**

**10:00 am—3:00 pm**

Call **800-442-1713** or **231-947-8920** for reservations and more information.

---

## **Child and Family Services Foster and Adoptive Parent Training Classes**

Foster and adoptive parent training classes will start on January 13, 2011 at Child and Family Services. These classes are a state requirement to becoming a licensed foster or adoptive home.

This is a 21-hour training program covering topics including discipline, adoption, planning for change, and making informed decisions.

If you are interested, please call 231-946-8975 ext. 1018 for more information.



# GRAND TRAVERSE AREA LITERACY COUNCIL



As this is the last newsletter for this year, I will recap our efforts for the year on behalf of adult non-readers in our service area (Grand Traverse, Antrim, Kalkaska and Leelanau counties).

GTALC trained over 25 tutors who with our existing tutors, serve over 65 adult learners. The learners, a mix of basic literacy and English as a Second Language students, met with their tutors individually, in small classes or in the learning lab at MichiganWorks! Together the learning hours amassed through this entire activity total over 9,000 hours.

GTALC partnered with the Probate and Family Court, Northwest Michigan Council of Governments, Kohls, and Grand Traverse Mall in its support of literacy.

This past year, GTALC completed the upgrading of some of its learning and assessment material made possible by the Anderson-Rogers Foundation, Inc. grant and provided tutor support to MichiganWorks! Via a contract. GTALC also participated in a Grand Traverse Mall book sale fundraiser and conducted a fund appeal at the close of this year.

In our efforts to inform the public about the impact of illiteracy on society, the economy and individuals, presentations were made to service organizations such as Rotary and Kiwanis and articles for both print and electronic media were produced.

GTALC has had a busy year but we by no means feel that we met the needs of all of those who can't read and suffer personally and economically as a result. We look to increasing our tutor services this coming year and refining learning programs which address the specific learning needs of our learners.

To close, for our tutors, our learners, partners, volunteers and our Board, I offer wishes for a happy and meaningful holiday season.

Dick Thompson, President  
Grand Traverse Area Literacy Council







GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY PROBATE COURT

GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT  
DAVID L. STOWE, PROBATE & FAMILY COURT JUDGE  
280 Washington St, Suite B 150, Traverse City, MI 49684  
922-4827

PRE-SORT STD.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
TRAVERSE CITY, MI 49684  
PERMIT NO. 229

Return Service Requested

ALL MEETINGS TAKE PLACE AT VOLUNTEER SERVICES  
UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

### **LEARNING PARTNERS**

1st Tuesday—4:00—5:00 pm

#### **No Regular Meeting**

Learning Partners and CASA meet  
January 18 for in-service. Please see  
Page 1

**Tuesday, February 1**



### **CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate)**

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday – 4:00 – 6:00 pm

**Tuesday, January 18**

In-service with Learning Partners  
Please see page 1

#### **No Regular Meeting in February**

Instead Tuesday, March 1st—meet  
with MI CASA Director



### **LITERACY COUNCIL**

3<sup>RD</sup> Wednesday – 6:00 pm

Traverse Area District Library

**Wednesday, January 19**



## **Michigan Mentoring Month 2011**

The 2011 theme for Michigan Mentoring Month is “Pass It On.” Throughout January, Mentor Michigan will celebrate the everyday, ordinary people who are making a difference for kids in Michigan. Mentors don’t need special skills—all they need to do is care about kids and be willing to volunteer about one hour a week.

Young people with mentors are more likely to....

1. Stay in school.
2. Achieve and aspire to better grades
3. Go to college

To find out more about Michigan Mentoring Month 2011, visit [www.mentormichigan.org](http://www.mentormichigan.org).

**Volunteer Services Offices will be Closed**

**Monday, January 17, 2011  
Martin Luther King Day**

**Monday, February 21, 2011  
President’s Day**